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Thursday, February 21, 1952

Meeting at the office this morning at nine o'clock. A round of office gatherings, then I [redacted] lunched with John Snyder and Jacques Dumaine, the French Ambassador. Jacques is an old friend, and, with his charming wife Cordelia (a Brazilian), has made the already beautiful house in Lisbon about the best Embassy residence I have ever seen. The French Government bought it some fifty years ago, after it had rented the palace during the preceding thirty years. There are wonderful tapestries, silver and gilt ornaments, and other furnishings supplied from Paris. A glorious view of the Tagus River is had from the back of the house, and from everywhere in the extensive gardens.

At lunch, there were the Prime Minister, M. Faure, Hervé Alphand, Guillaume Guindey, M. Gaillard (with whom I had a long and interesting chat about his native county of Cognac), and our host.

At three o'clock, a flock of others arrived -- Acheson, Bob Lovett, General Bradley, Messrs. Pawley, Nash and Harriman. We went into session and discussed the French military budget and ~~mutual~~ American aid.

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When we terminated -- meanwhile Bourgès-Maunoury, M. Schuman, Jean Monnet had arrived -- the situation was [redacted] confused. As I left, Faure told me he despaired of being able to get a satisfactory budget through his Parliament, and he did not expect to remain long in office.

I went to the Embassy where we rehashed the intricacies of the French military situation. I arrived late at the Aviz, and changed my sweater -- in this cold but deceptively mild appearing climate -- for a waistcoat. E. and I then went, some distance out, to a huge reception given by the President of the Portuguese Republic, in what must have been one of the old royal palaces, now called the "National Palace". It was well worth seeing. The dining room, where a buffet was set up under the charge of dozens of scarlet coated waiters in knee breeches, held 2,500 people. Hundreds of others wandered about the vast reception rooms, where many of the ornaments, especially the Compagnie des Indes porcelains, were of high quality. Much of the furniture was French Empire or Portuguese baroque of the same period. I know nothing about the history of this palace. The great earthquake of

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1755 destroyed many of the buildings in Lisbon and its environs, and I would guess a large part of this edifice was post-earthquake.

We got back to the Aviz about nine, and had dinner, part of which, the native smoked salmon, was the best thing I've ever tasted. I also had today, for the first time in 11-1/2 years, a pleasant light wine called Lello from the Douro district. Dumaine told a story about Alain Gerbault, a famous French sailor who, as I recall it, circumnavigated the globe in a tiny boat. During a voyage in the Atlantic one of the mammoth ocean liners passed him. Addressing its stern through a megaphone he so alarmed the captain that, at the cost of thousands of dollars, the great ship put about and hours later during the complicated maneuver hove to and spoke to Gerbault to tell him to clamber aboard and save himself. "Oh, you've misunderstood me," he answered, "I hailed you to see if there was anything I could do for you."

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